

BRIEFS

IMPRISONED PASTOR SUBJECT OF PETITION

WASHINGTON, D.C. (BP) — ChinaAid will launch a petition Aug. 2 asking U.S. officials to pressure China on the release of pastor John Cao, according to a July 24 report in Christianity Today. Cao, a U.S. green card holder who maintains his Chinese citizenship, was arrested in March 2017 for allegedly organizing illegal border crossings from neighboring Myanmar (formerly known as Burma), and found guilty and sentenced to prison in February. The petition needs 100,000 signatures within 30 days to gain presidential attention, said Brynne Lawrence, ChinaAid's English editor, in a Baptist Press interview.

STUDY WARNING OF RISE IN ADHD CASES

NASHVILLE (BP) — Teens who report high levels of digital media use are twice as likely to develop attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), reports a study published July 17 in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Christ, in mental health practitioners say excessive screen time can damage the soul as well. "Screens today are the modern-day Baal, the socially acceptable thing that keeps us from a deepening relationship with Jesus," said Joshua Straub, a child psychologist and marriage/family strategist for LifeWay Christian Resources.

GATEWAY SEMINARY FINISHES TRANSITION

BREA, Ca. (BP) — Gateway Seminary's southern California campus in Brea, Ca., officially closed July 27 in anticipation of moving academic operations to the seminary's new primary campus in Ontario, Ca. It was the final step in Gateway's transition to its primary campus from Mill Valley in northern California to Ontario in southern California. That move included a name change from Golden Gate Seminary, as well as opening a new regional campus in Fremont that will continue the work the seminary began in the San Francisco area nearly 75 years ago.

Mississippi Baptists looking to future

Leadership program trains young people interested in future public service roles

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Kenny Digby has had a dream to train outstanding young Mississippi Baptists for future public leadership roles in the state, and the executive director/treasurer of the Christian Action Commission (CAC) was finally able to put that dream into action at the inaugural Christian Leadership Institute (CLI) July 9-13 at Baptist-affiliated Blue Mountain College (BMC) in Blue Mountain.

One of Digby's job responsibilities is to make himself and the Christian resources of CAC available to the state's officeholders. He sees the need to reach out to the next generation and develop Christian leaders.

"These 34 young people, from seventh grade through college freshman in age, were chosen by local Mississippi Baptist leadership because they have in some way exhibited some consideration for public office when they are adults," Digby said. "The theme of the CLI, 'Be the Difference,' is something we wanted them to discover in their own lives as they think about public service."

As they were told, "The road in front of your house leads anywhere."

In addition to Digby, speakers addressing the young leaders included:

■ Tate Reeves, Mississippi's lieutenant governor and former state treasurer.

■ Jim Futral, executive director/treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson.



YOUNG LEADERS — Miss. Lt. Gov. Tate Reeves (bottom row, left), Blue Mountain College president Barbara McMillin (bottom row, right), and Christian Action Commission executive director/treasurer Kenny Digby (second row, right) welcome 34 young people chosen for their leadership potential and Gospel commitment to the first-ever Christian Leadership Institute July 9-13 at Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain. (BR Special photo)

■ Jim Voyles, pastor of Mission of Hope Church in Glen, and an Alcorn County supervisor.

■ Sean Milner, executive director of the Baptist Children's Village in Jackson, and an attorney.

■ Nick Bain, member of the Miss. House of Representatives from Alcorn County, attorney, and CAC board member.

■ Tommy Wilson, founder of Living Free Ministries, a faith-based addiction recovery program in Corinth.

■ Andy Gipson, Miss. Commissioner of Agriculture, former state representative, attorney, and Mississippi Baptist pastor.

■ Doug Hayhurst, commander of the Miss. State Guard.

■ Ronald Meeks, BMC professor of Biblical and associated studies.

■ Andrew Chesteen, pastor of Tiplersville Church, Tiplersville.

■ David Haynes, pastor of Trinity Church, Fulton.

see LEADERSHIP on p. 7

Carey inaugurates pharmacy school



READY TO START — Members of the first class of the William Carey University School of Pharmacy opening on the Tradition campus in Biloxi attend orientation July 23. The 58 students hail from across the country. (BR special photo courtesy of WCU)

BILOXI, Ms. (Special) — William Carey University (WCU) in Hattiesburg, affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention, officially opened its new School of Pharmacy July 23 on WCU's Tradition campus in Biloxi.

Michael Malloy, dean of the school, said location was a factor in the decision to seek approval of the new program from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education.

"It's the second pharmacy program in the state and the only professional degree program on the Gulf Coast. This makes it the only opportunity to get a professional degree without having to drive for hours or move to a different place."

see CAREY on p. 5

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Nashville, Tennessee
SEP 04 2018
SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOC
905 DTH
SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOC
901 COMMERCE ST STE 401
NASHVILLE TN 37203-3628



From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Watch out...

Satan truly does roam the earth (1 Peter 5:8). Can anyone doubt that? From the fields of dead babies gassed by their own government in Syria to the extermination of Christians in Nigeria to efforts in the West to glorify and expand infanticide, it's an open-and-shut conclusion the devil is on the march today.

Not that he hasn't been present in past generations, but it often does seem in our modern world he's working overtime to draw as many people as possible into the same miserable existence he is condemned to endure for eternity. What a tragedy that so many people are fooled by the Evil One into believing the lifestyle he advocates is the best-tasting, most entertaining and pleasurable, and in the end eminently satisfying. It's not, and we've been warned (Luke 16:19-31).

One of the most effective methods Satan employs to turn people to him, if not the most effective, is to ruin the faith and trust we have in the institution known as the bride of Christ: His church. Every church that is today successful in bringing people to Christ and making disciples (Matthew 28:18-20) is or soon will be under attack — in Mississippi, no less.

Nothing makes the devil angrier than a church body that is passionately fulfilling the command of our Lord and Savior in the Great Commission. Nothing makes the Evil One more desperate than a church body that supports its members putting the Great Commission into action. Be ready; he's coming after your beloved church as surely as he's coming after you.

Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill., outside Chicago is the latest victim of Satan's successful infiltration of a thriving church. Founding pastor Bill Hybels spent 43 years building non-denominational Willow Creek Church into an icon of American evangelicalism.

Many people don't like how he did it, and mention of Hybels and Willow Creek in this commentary is not meant as an

endorsement or criticism of his methods. It is offered simply as an example of Satan's intentions toward all of us.

Hybels has been accused of engaging in sexual misconduct toward female church staffers for many years. He has denied all the allegations. Church leadership initially defended Hybels and cast doubt on the women coming forward by calling them liars and promoting the idea that the women had banded together with the intention of damaging Hybels' reputation.

As the certainty of Hybels' illicit conduct mounted, church leadership reluctantly admitted to some of their mistakes and Hybels resigned while holding fast to his insistence that he is innocent of all the accusations.

One of the church's ministers, Steve Carter, was chosen to replace Hybels as the male half of a male-female pastor team. Now Carter has resigned, citing the growing list of women staffers who continue to come forward and the manner in which church leadership has handled the crisis.

He had considered resigning weeks ago as the scandal grew, he said, but decided to delay his decision. "At this point, however, I cannot, in good conscience, appear before you as your Lead Teaching Pastor when my soul is so at odds with the institution," he wrote.

Chalk up another victory for the devil, who has succeeded once again in bringing low a church body which must be dazed by the reality of their situation and confused about the future. The legal liabilities generated by Hybels' alleged misconduct are unfathomable at this point. Loss of membership because of members' loss of faith is incalculable at this point. The prospect of people turning away from Jesus in disillusionment is horrifying.

The moral of this story? Be vigilant. Guard your heart. Guard your church. Understand if you're guarding your heart, you're guarding your church.

Most important of all: Pray, pray, pray. That's the best way to make our churches impenetrable.

Grappling with Elephants

It is one thing to realize there is an elephant in the room but it is entirely another to realize you are in the midst of a herd of elephants. When it comes to disciple-making in the church today we have some elephants. Christ's command to make disciples seems so straightforward, yet we struggle as if there are things we seem to be missing.

Most of us would agree the job of pastors and Christian leaders is to make disciples who can make disciples who make disciples. That is what the Great Commission demands (Matt. 28:18-20). We are to teach people to be obedient followers of Jesus in our homes, at our work, where we play, and to the farthest reaches of the earth.

Yet when we look around it is obvious that almost everywhere in North America and indeed across the globe we could do better in helping people have a dynamic, fruitful relationship with our Lord and Savior. Our culture is filled with pain and hurt. Our church members are surrounded by frustrating circumstances that seem to defy the wonderful claims of peace and joy that should come with adherence to the Gospel.

There is an epidemic of drug abuse that plagues us from the city playgrounds to the rural pastures. We are experiencing the results of years of ruinous racism to which we in the church turned a blind eye, or tacitly approved. We feel the effects of sexualized culture that has subjected our wives and daughters to be preyed upon by the unchecked desires of those caught in the web of unbridled passions for power and sex.

We in the church have often been handcuffed in helping people be free because we are strapped down in debt as we chase our materialistic dreams that are wood, hay, and stubble. We wonder why it is so difficult to make disciples for Jesus Christ.

In the Gospel of Matthew we see some of the things Jesus did when He walked the earth making disciples. His



Guest opinion

with David Gray

method of dealing with the elephants in the room might best be understood by the phrase, "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people" (Matthew 9:35, KJV).

In the church we must teach people how to live in a culture that is often hostile or apathetic to Christian values. Everywhere we go we must declare that Jesus is the only way and that His Word is the ultimate truth that must be obeyed.

Along with teaching and preaching, we as the church must be appropriate healing agents within our communities.

We have the answer. We know radical obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ can defeat racism, unhealthy sexual expression, the effects of economic challenges, and whatever the devil or our flesh can devise. The question is, will we deal with these elephants?

It has been said the best way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time. I think it is time we develop an appetite for elephant. When we do, we will find ourselves in the expansive room of God's wonderful blessing.

Gray is pastor of First Church, Garrettsville, Oh.; past president of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio; trustee at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; chairman of the Renaissance Family Center in Windham, Oh.; and vice moderator of Steel Valley Association.

THE BaptistRecord

Editor
William H. Perkins Jr.
wperkins@mbcb.org

Associate Editor
Tony Martin
tmartin@mbcb.org

Layout/Design
Megan Young
myoung@mbcb.org

Advertising
Dana Richardson
drichardson@mbcb.org

Circulation Manager
DeAnna Burgess
dburgess@mbcb.org

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Whit Lewis, New Albany
Derrick Wilson, Kosciusko
Carolyn Reeves, Oxford
Garland Boyd, Brookhaven
Lucy Stringer, Foxworth
Don Hicks, Bay Springs

Postmaster:
Send changes of address to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and address changes to: The Editor, Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Tel: (601) 968-3800
Fax: (601) 292-3330
E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org



BAPTISTS

VOLUME 142 • NUMBER 31 • ISSN 0005-5778

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$11.99 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date. All submissions are subject to editing.

Nigeria Christian slaughters called 'genocide'

MIDDLE BELT, Nigeria (BP) — The mass slaughter of Christians in Nigeria is calculated genocide abetted by the government in Africa's most Christian nation, says a growing number of leaders calling on the United States to intervene.

Evangelical John Stonestreet, president of the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, is among the latest to describe as genocide the killing of some 6,000 Christians this year alone in Nigeria by jihadist Fulani herdsmen aided by re-surgency Boko Haram terrorists.

"This is genocide," Stonestreet has said. "And the government... there is abetting it. It is dismissing it as a land dispute."

Stonestreet joins a growing list of Christian, political, and social activists proclaiming the deaths genocide, pogrom, or ethno-religious cleansing, including:

- Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).

- Jubilee Campaign for Religious Freedom.

- Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW).

- International Christian Concern (ICC).

- Lift Up Now grassroots foundation, led by Southern Baptist Nigeria native Adeniyi Ojutiku.

The killings are not a matter of a traditional land dispute that has separated Christians and nomadic Fulani Muslim herders for ages, according to Ojutiku, CAN, Stonestreet, and others. Instead, they say, the government and herdsmen have used the historical land dispute as an excuse, denying that a jihad is in progress.

Christians 'main target'

"There is no doubt that Christians are the main target of the incessant human carnage being perpetrated by (Nigerian President Muhammadu) Buhari's Fulani kinsmen," Ojutiku told Baptist Press Aug. 1, noting Buhari's Fulani heritage. "What is happening is that the Is-

lamic Jihadists have advanced a strong but false narrative to obscure the truth."

Christian activists charge Buhari with complicity in killings concentrated in the nation's Middle Belt where the majority Muslim north and the majority Christian south and east overlap with diversity.

According to figures from CSW and CAN, the Fulani jihadists have destroyed more than 500 churches in the Middle Belt's Benue State alone since 2011, and internally displaced about 800,000 people in the state with 180,000 of them living in camps and others living with relatives or as squatters.

In the most recent mass attack, Fulani killed by some estimates more than 200 Christians as they left the July funeral of a pastor's relative in the Middle Belt's Plateau State. Thousands were displaced over two days of attacks in 15 communities, according to press reports.

Fulani herdsmen and Boko Haram gunmen "are prowling villages, shooting and killing innocent Christians," CAN said as early as January.

CAN has reviewed the catalogue of horrendous and inhuman attacks on several states and mostly Benue State from 2013 — 2018," CAN said Jan. 16. "The impression has now been firmly established that the Islamists of northern Nigeria have 'legalized jihad' in Nigeria."

In the highest death tolls, ICC accused Fulani militants and Boko Haram of killing 50,000 to 70,000 Christians in the last 20 years. In its 2018 special report on Nigeria, ICC termed Nigeria the biggest killing ground for Christians today. Other tallies blame the groups for about 30,000 deaths.

Help from U.S.

Some contend the U.S. government should use diplomatic force to pressure Buhari to end

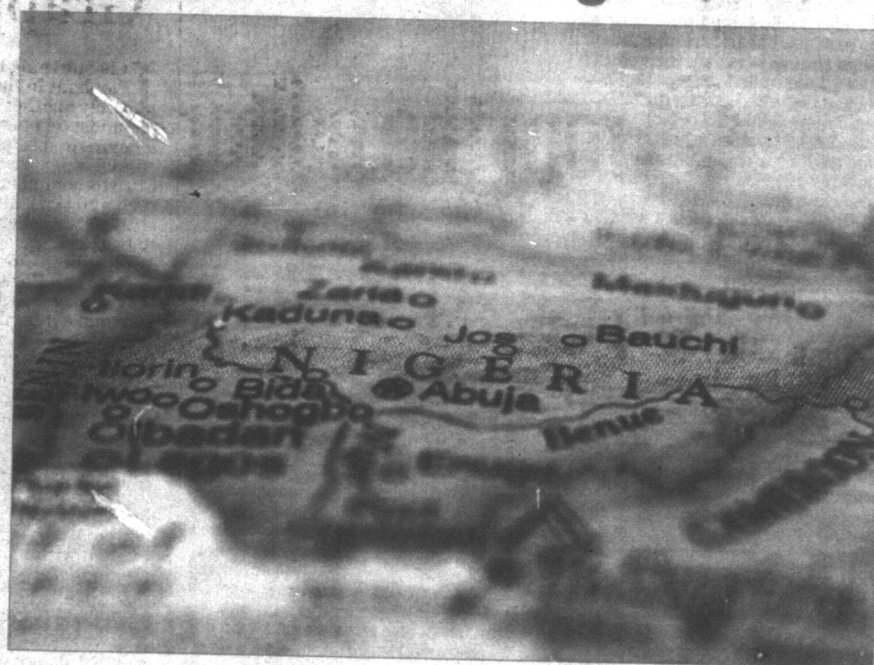


Photo by Kylie Ellway/Shutterstock.com

the systematic slaughter. Ojutiku also called for Buhari's forced resignation.

Ojutiku termed the ongoing killings "an unfortunate pogrom" and "ethnic cleansing" when he spoke at the Global Coalition Working to Defeat Persecution and Violence in Nigeria, a multinational summit hosted by the Baptist World Alliance at its Falls Church, Va., office in February.

Buhari has failed to charge perpetrators with a crime, dismissed evidence that the herdsmen are armed with sophisticated weapons such as AK-47 rifles and chemicals, and deceptively abetted the killing, many activists say.

CAN has called on Buhari to prosecute for genocide the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN), a group supporting the herdsmen.

The Miyetti Allah organiza-

tion should be tagged a terrorist organization," CAN said in an official resolution Jan. 16. "Its leaders should be arrested and prosecuted for the genocide against the Christian minorities in the Middle Belt."

Buhari has it within his power to stop the killings, Ojutiku told BP, and "is by implication" complicit in the wanton killings.

"Despite several thousand people killed from last December to date, only a handful of people have been arrested for the crime. Even then, the chief inspector of police who masterminded the arrest of some culprits in the most recent killing in Plateau State was immediately forced out of office by the government."

International hearing

In addition to Buhari's forced resignation, Ojutiku

suggests the U.S. government conduct a hearing on Nigerian atrocities with testimonies from Sam Brownback, U.S. ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom, and others concerned.

The escalating violence increases the need for a U.S. special envoy to Nigeria and the Lake Chad Area, Ojutiku said, as others have encouraged including the Global Coalition Working to Defeat Persecution and Violence in Nigeria.

Buhari has denied charges of abetting the killings and largely ignored assertions of genocide. In an April meeting at the White House, U.S. President Donald Trump encouraged Buhari to enact widespread, peaceful solutions to the violence and to protect all people regardless of ethnicity or religion.

Bible Gateway marks anniversary, logs billions of searches



NASHVILLE (BP) — Celebrating their 25th anniversary August 1, Bible Gateway announced their website has been viewed more than 14 billion times by people using more than one billion devices.

"Our mission statement is 'To honor Christ by equipping people to read and understand the Bible wherever they are,'" said Rachel Barach, general manager of Bible Gateway. "What an honor and privilege to be able to serve so many people around the world dur-

ing the last quarter-century, doing just that."

Bible Gateway began in 1993 as a Bible research tool for students at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mi. Today, it is the world's most visited Christian website with 200-plus Bible versions to view in more than 70 languages.

"God has been faithful these last 25 years and we're excited about how He will continue to use Bible Gateway to further his kingdom and help people know and share His Word," Barach said.

The website tracks the words, verses, and even emoji that people have used as search terms. The top five keyword searches on Bible Gateway are love, peace, faith, hope, and joy.

The five Bible verses searched and shared the most by Bible Gateway users are John 3:16, Jeremiah 29:11, Philippians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Romans 8:28.

The five countries most searching Bible Gateway are United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Mexico, and Philippines.

The title of this article was a revelation to me of some folks' feelings about fellowship time during worship services. I heard a staff member talking about a person in their church who said they didn't care for the "hugging and mugging" during the fellowship song. I don't think that person was being mean. I would point out that he/she was being creative in observing an oftentimes enjoyable experience in many if not most of our churches.

It is not unusual to be in a worship service or other Baptist gathering and hear someone from the podium say, "Would you take just a moment and shake hands with the folks around you and welcome them?" accompanied by a song or just a time of organized, expressive chaos to let everybody know we're so glad they've come to church.

However, I have occasionally met someone in churches where I was preaching or maybe just visiting who wasn't particularly happy about doing that. Basically, it's a fellowship time and can be a happy, meaningful, positive experience, but for some it's not always that way. For those of us who enjoy that two-to-four-minute opportunity to shake everybody's hand, we need to be aware of the people who may not be into the moment like we are.

This act of close fellowship is built on the idea from Scripture about how we ought to greet one another and the visitors who are in our midst during church times. The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Timothy 3:2 that a bishop or pastor is a person who should be "given to hospitality." Paul repeats that same insightful truth in Titus 1:8, where he writes that the pastor should be someone who is a "lover of hospitality."

The Apostle Peter also refers to this in 1 Peter 4:9 where he writes, "Use hospitality one to another without grudging." In other words, if you're going to have hospitality toward folks don't do it with your genuine emotional care throttled down.

Truthfully, it is not unusual to run into people who find it a little bit awkward when this type of fellowship time takes place. New members and visitors may not know exactly the protocol for those



Hugging and Mugging

events so when we turn around and do it to them, they may not quite know to respond. They aren't mad at anybody or fussing about it; they've maybe never been exposed to hugging and mugging.

I can't advise you and your church on this but looking at Scripture and what we're supposed to be, we're not really instructed to make people feel uneasy. This type of fellowship is really directed at making them feel welcome and comfortable. I would be honest with you, though, that I believe we sometimes go overboard.

Someone suggested that in some churches people get so involved during the fellowship time that others could think they are exchanging recipes. It can be overdone for sure, and for sure it can be underdone. I have seen people who come into a service as far removed from anyone else as they can be. They don't want to be greeted or have a handshake or a hug and may prefer not even a smile towards them. Some have the attitude that they've come to worship God and not to meet all you people — and there is something to be said for that during certain times in life when people come to church out of some great need or are carrying a burden about which you don't know anything. They're struggling just to be there and don't need the added layer of how we interact with them during fellowship times.

Why some people are hesitant about this event is worth thinking about. For

one thing, there are people who have health reasons for not wanting to participate. Health reasons? Absolutely. There may be people who are going through chemotherapy or some other medical procedure that lowers their immune system, maybe a recent surgery that makes the person susceptible to infection, and yet they come to church because they need to worship the living God. It's the same health considerations that cause some people in our society today not to shake hands or hug or desire any other personal contact. An explanation from them is not required, but what is required is sensitivity on your part to just speak or nod and allow them to have their space.

On the other hand, there are people who knowingly or unknowingly have some contagious disease that you could catch. Either of these things carried to the extreme will put most of us in a class on germophobia, so obsessed by it that we don't want to touch anything, open a door, or shake hands with a person, and would almost prefer living in a glass bubble separated from anybody and everything.

Sometimes people are resistant for hospitality reasons. A person may come from another background or culture, visiting church for the first time, and have no idea what is going on. There are cultures in which men are not supposed to speak to women. There are cultures where people have a larger personal space around

them than we typically do in America, so when they walk into such situations it is shocking to them.

I have been in a number of countries with Christian people where the practice is to do what Peter suggests in 1 Peter 5:14, and greet the brethren with a holy kiss. I must tell you those times have been awkward for me. I have never been a part of that and don't feel at ease doing that. I have been in those settings where greeting the brethren with a holy kiss is kind of a hug and an air kiss on each cheek, but then there are times when somebody comes up and gives you a smack. It was for Paul a cultural act that continues to this day, but it's not a cultural act with which most American Christians are familiar or have ever seen, and they don't care to participate. Others coming into our cultural environment and trying to adapt or understand Southern hospitality don't have a point of reference, either. We need to be sensitive enough to recognize we are putting them in an awkward position.

Another consideration is important to keep in mind: there are hidden reasons why some people don't like and really feel awkward even in shaking hands and smiling at each other. You may not know that the person sitting just down the row from you grew up in a truly abusive home situation, maybe abused physically or sexually or encountered someone who crossed the line in some other way and deeply hurt them. There can be emotional scars from those situations that radiate toward anyone who comes close to them. If nothing like that has ever happened to you, give thanks. If it has, you understand why people can sometimes be a little standoffish. The truth is that all of us carry things in our mental and emotional memory banks that make us feel comfortable in some settings and uncomfortable in other settings.

The next time the pastor or staff person at your church leads you into the hugging and mugging moment, do so with genuine Christian care and equal amounts of genuine Christian love and sensitivity.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

OBITUARY

Claude Eli Wiltshire, 80, longtime Mississippi Baptist pastor and radio/TV personality, died July 12 at his home in Carrollton. The son of Eli Eugene Wiltshire and Katherine Broome Wiltshire, he was born on January 31, 1938, and was one of nine children. He graduated from J. Z. George High School in North Carrollton. Wiltshire preached his first sermon at the age of 17 and was ordained to the Gospel ministry in 1958 at Providence Church, Carrollton. He attended Mississippi College in Clinton; Washington Bible College in Lanham, Md.; Capital Bible Seminary; and Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Ga. He pastored churches in the Washington, D.C. area, and in Mississippi in Carroll, Leflore, Grenada, and Tallahatchie counties. Wilt-

shire preached many revivals, had a radio program for six years, and appeared in several television programs. He served in the U.S. Air Force, and while stationed in Japan did mission work and helped establish a mission off base. He worked for the Town of Carrollton for 26 years as the water operator. Wiltshire is survived by his wife of 48 years, Patricia Ann Heffner Wiltshire of Carrollton; son, Troy Eli Wiltshire (Amanda) of Carrollton; sister, Roxie Wiltshire Kinney of Muskegon, Mi.; brother, Tom D. Wiltshire of Carrollton; and one granddaughter. Funeral service was July 16 at Providence Church, followed by interment with military rites in the church cemetery. Williams & Lord Funeral Home in Greenwood was in charge of arrangements.

CLASSIFIEDS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, ZACHARY, LA. IS SEEKING AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF WORSHIP. Must have the calling, gifting, training, and passion to lead a large and diverse ministry of worship. Must be able to lead a traditional service and a blended/contemporary service and to lead a large choir (70 voices), band, praise team, and media/tech team. Send resumes to charlie@fbcc.org.

WINDOW AND SCREEN SHOP — windows and storm windows built to fit your opening. Plus new window screens and rescreen old screens. Call Tom Cook 601-709-4679.

AFFORDABLE BEACHSIDE VACATION CONDOS: GULF SHORES & ORANGE BEACH, AL. Rent direct from Christian Family Owners, lowest prices on the Beach. www.gulfshorescondos.com, 251-656-4936, 205-556-0368, 251-752-2368.

FOR SALE: 2BDRM/2BATH CABIN. Call 281-855-4469 or Email pdw4760@att.net for more details and information.

HOPPER STAINED GLASS: Custom windows, restoration and repairs, safety and insulated glass, custom aluminum and wood frames. Statewide 601-502-0202, www.hopperstained.com.

GENUINE INSURANCE RATES ON: Health Insurance and Medicare Supplements. Call 1-800-541-8196 or visit www.turnerinsurance.com.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, FREE ESTIMATES: Davis Upholstery, Gultman, Miss., phone 601-776-6617.

GATLINBURG RENTAL: Cabin \$95/night. Contact: 832-922-0401 or Email: pdw4760@att.net for information and booking.

DO YOU NEED A CHURCH PIANIST? Try piano accompaniment CDs for congregational singing from Worship Service Resources. Hymns, Choruses, DVDs, Lyrics - FREE DEMO - Call 1-877-977-6800 or visit wspplanocds.com. Try before you buy!

STAINED GLASSWORKS, INC., SERVING MS & AL since 1992. Call 800-605-2970.

WWW.SEBRENHOMEIMPROVEMENT.COM. Christian owned Don & Rita Sebrén. 601-992-2092. All home improvements, siding, energy efficient windows, metal & shingle roofs, screen & sunrooms, patio covers, decks, room additions, kitchen & bath upgrades.

PULPIT SUPPLY AVAILABLE: Retired Southern Baptist Navy chaplain available for Sunday pulpit supply on short notice (pastor illness, vacation, rest, etc.). 100 mile radius of Hattiesburg. Deacon of Hardy Street Baptist Church. Graduate of New Orleans Baptist and Fuller Theological Seminaries. References available. Compensation unimportant. Contact him at 601-408-4608 or bennythorbsy.com.

MS POSITIONS

RAYMOND ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, JACKSON, MS, SEEKING A PART TIME YOUTH PASTOR. Email resume to jhorner56@hotmail.com.

DREW BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR— Please email resume to drewbaptistchurch@gmail.com or U.S. mail to Drew Baptist Church, 139 S Church St., Drew, MS 38737.

FIRST BAPTIST OF GREENVILLE IS SEARCHING FOR A FULL TIME MINISTER OF STUDENTS. All interested candidates please submit your resume to malexander@fbcgrenville.net.

HEUCKS RETREAT BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC. Persons interested may email resume to Corey Myers at cmeyers913@gmail.com or mail to Heucks Retreat Baptist Church, 2167 Heucks Retreat Rd NE, Brookhaven, MS 38601, attn: Corey Myers. Position description available upon request. Deadline to apply is October 1, 2018.

RICHMOND BAPTIST CHURCH IN RURAL LEE COUNTY, MS, NEAR TUPELO IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PRAISE TEAM LEADER/MUSIC MINISTER. Email resume to baptistworshipleader@gmail.com.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

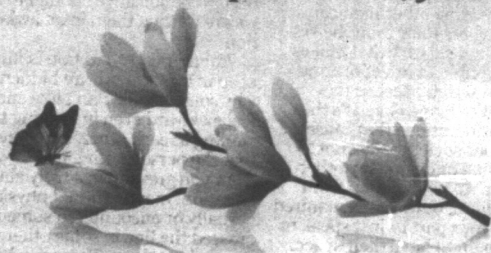
Matthew 10:27 NAS

August 9, 2018

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

MINISTRY WIVES CONFERENCE

10.29.18 | First Baptist Church, Jackson



IF YOU'RE THE WIFE OF A...

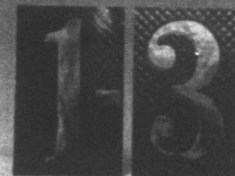
- Pastor
- Associate Pastor
- Campus Minister
- Chaplain
- Minister of Administration
- Minister of Music
- Missionary
- Youth Minister
- Any minister with our MS Southern Baptist Churches and entities

... THEN THIS CONFERENCE IS FOR YOU!

Sponsored by the Pastor/Leadership Development Department.
More information coming soon!

REVELATION

THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES



JANUARY BIBLE STUDY PREVIEW

9.4.18 – Blue Mountain College

9.11.18 – Garaywa Camp & Conference Center

9.13.18 – William Carey University

Register online at www.mbc.org/jbs to receive a 50% discount on the purchase of your leader guide. You will receive your book at the event.

For more info, contact the Sunday School/Small Groups Department at elindigrin@mbcb.org or call 601-292-3292.

MARGARET LACKEY OFFERING FOR STATE MISSIONS

MISSISSIPPI

Tell this People

ISAIAH 55:1

VALUES OF THE MARGARET LACKEY STATE MISSIONS OFFERING

- Sharpens our focus on mission needs in Mississippi, and trains leaders to respond evangelistically.
- Adds valuable funding to mission networks and leaders who are prepared to work in Mississippi.
- Encourages churches to become more involved in calling and sending Mississippi missionaries.
- Enlarges our witness in Mississippi by adding new churches. Two million of our neighbors are not actively participating in church.

2018 GOAL: \$2,100,000

Contact Mission Strategy at 601-292-3231 or e-mail bbridges@mbcb.org for more information.

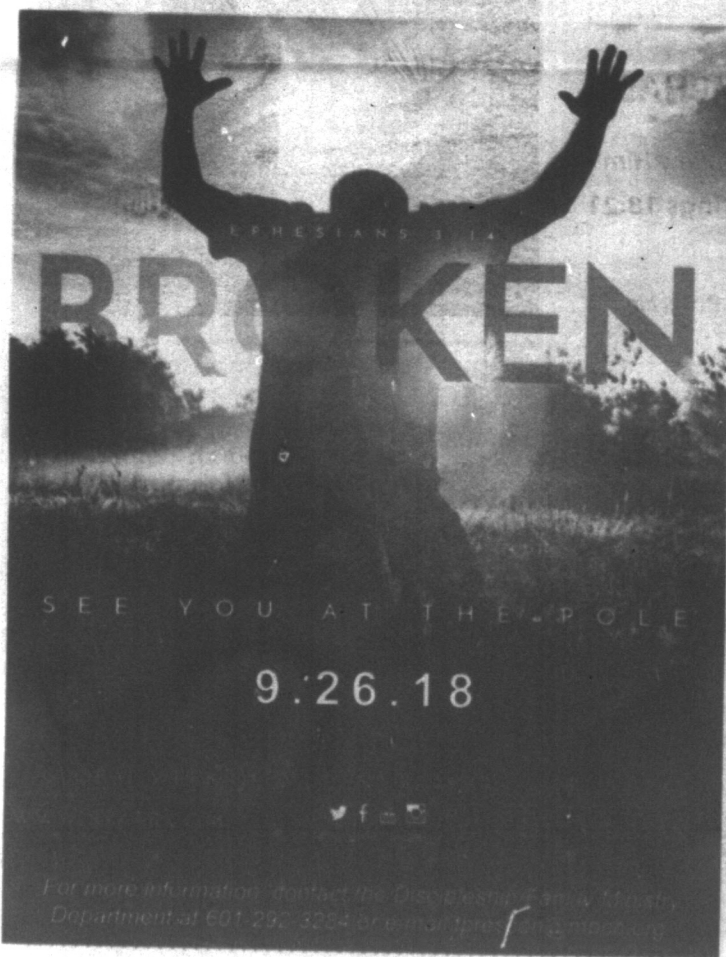
BAPTIST STUDENT UNION

TO KNOW HIM. TO MAKE HIM KNOWN.

MISSISSIPPI BSU NEEDS YOUR PRAYERS AS THE SEMESTER BEGINS!

- Pray for our BSU staff — that as they share and teach, it will produce faith and obedience in the hearts of students.
- Pray that God will give our BSU Leadership Teams and Small Group Leaders caring hearts, prayerful spirits, and the ability to lead well.
- Pray that our returning BSUs will be active witnesses on their campuses and live in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.
- Pray that God will be drawing students to Himself and that students and staff in our ministries will cross paths with those He is drawing. Pray that non-believers on our campuses would hear God's Word and believe it.
- Pray that the Father would raise up students this year to serve on short-term and long-term missions for the sake of the gospel throughout the U.S. and among the nations.

Contact Collegiate Ministry at 601-292-3299 or e-mail mhopper@mbcb.org for more information.



SEE YOU AT THE POLE

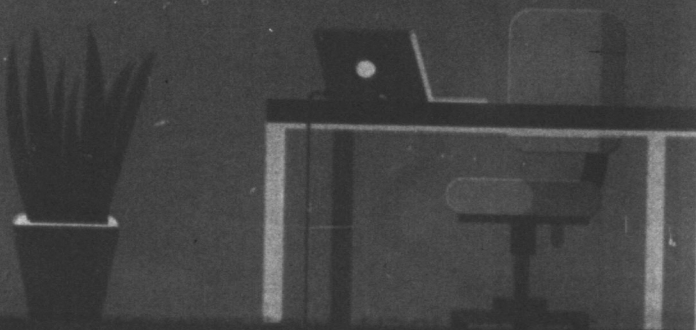
9.26.18

For more information, contact the Discipleship & Family Ministry Department at 601-292-3284 or e-mail pres@mbcb.org

SEPTEMBER 11-13, 2018

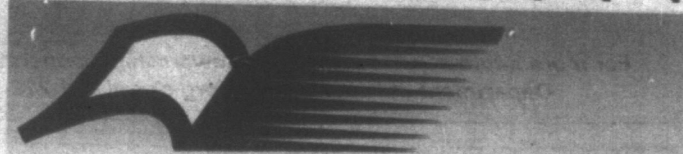
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING COURSE & SKILLSHOPS

FOR MINISTRY ASSISTANTS



For more info, contact Pastor Leadership Development at vol@mbcb.org or call 601-292-3305

MISSISSIPPI



BAPTISTS CHURCH LIBRARY MINISTRY

REGISTRATION FOR THE CLM CONFERENCE IS OPEN!

Check out the "Early CLM Special" if you register online before August 31, 2018!

REGISTRATION: <http://tinyurl.com/2018CLMMadison>

SPECIAL GUEST AUTHOR: Rachel Hauck

Contact Communication Services at 601-292-3378 or e-mail jchemer@mbcb.org for additional information

PASTOR/LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT

THE LEADER I WANT TO BE



AUGUST 16, 2018

**DESOTO HILLS
BAPTIST CHURCH**
SOUTHAVEN, MS

REGISTRATION:
TINYURL.COM/JHUNT2018

A ONE DAY EVENT WITH JOHNNY HUNT

Transparency

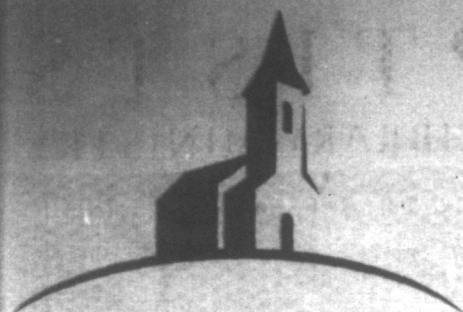
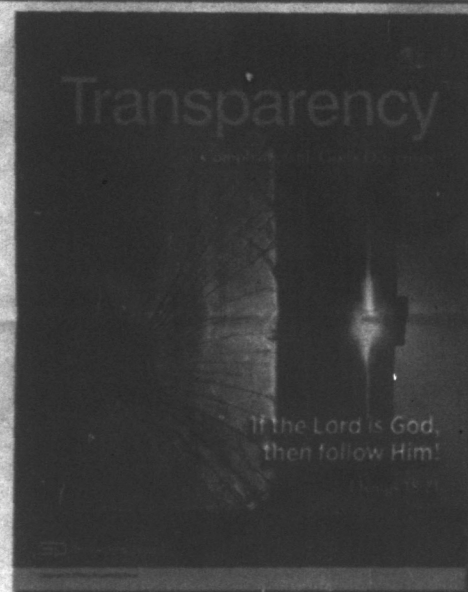
Complying with God's Directives

2018 CHURCH-WIDE STEWARDSHIP EMPHASIS

"If the Lord is God, then follow Him!"

1 Kings 18:21

For more information, contact the Stewardship/Cooperative Program
Department at lleavell@mbcb.org or call 601-292-3347.



Small Church Youth Ministry Workshops

6:00 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.
Supper is served at 6:00 p.m.

AUGUST 23, 2018
Parkway Baptist Church
117 Sgt. Prentiss Dr.
Natchez, MS 39120

SEPTEMBER 13, 2018
New Palestine Baptist Church
2336 Palestine Rd.
Picayune, MS 39466

SEPTEMBER 20, 2018
Ackerman Baptist Church
185 E. Cherry St.
Ackerman, MS 39735

OCTOBER 25, 2018
Forest Baptist Church
439 E. 1st St.
Forest, MS 39074

NOVEMBER 6, 2018
First Baptist Church Eupora
520 W. Fox Ave.
Eupora, MS 39744

NOVEMBER 8, 2018
Hillcrest Baptist Church
5950 Terry Rd.
Byram, MS 39272

For questions, contact
Discipleship & Family Ministry at
tpresson@mbcb.org.
To register, visit
www.tinyurl.com/2018SmallChurch.

UNSHAKABLE PURSUIT

Celebrating
Missions & Ministries

WMU ANNUAL MEETING AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING
FOR WMU MISSIONS AND WOMEN'S MINISTRY
LEADERS

AUGUST 17-18, 2018 | GARAYWA CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

For more information, contact the WMU/WM at 601-292-3317.



2018 Auditions for the 2019 Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir & Orchestra

Open to 9th-12th Graders involved
in the music ministry of Mississippi
Southern Baptist Churches

REGISTER 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO
THE AUDITION!

SEPT. 15, 2018
10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
FBC, Columbia

SEPT. 27, 2018
4:00-7:00 p.m.
FBC, Meridian

OCT. 20, 2018
1:00-4:00 p.m.
Baptist Building,
Jackson

SEPT. 16, 2018
1:30-4:00 p.m.
FBC, Long Beach

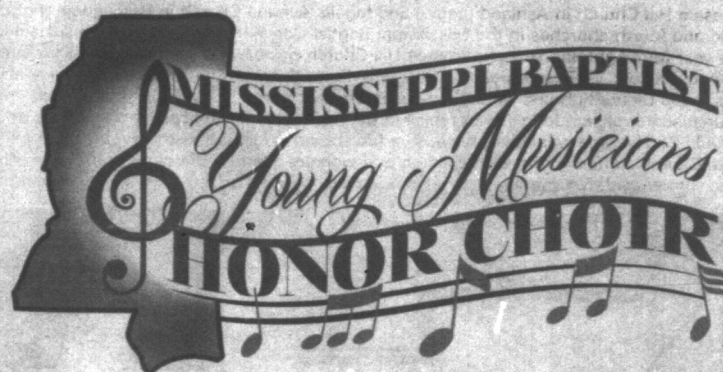
OCT. 13, 2018
1:30-4:00 p.m.
Belden BC, Belden

OCT. 21, 2018
2:00-5:00 p.m.
Baptist Building,
Jackson

SEPT. 20, 2018
4:00-7:00 p.m.
Fairview BC,
Columbus

OCT. 14, 2017
1:30-4:00 p.m.
Belden BC, Belden

For more information, contact the Church Music Department at
cwtaylor@mbcb.org or call 601-292-3267.



April 6-7, 2019

Location announcement coming soon!

VIDEO Auditions for the 2019 Mississippi Baptist Young
Musicians Honor Choir have begun as of August 1, 2018,
for children in grades 4-6. The deadline for videos is
November 15. Videos may be submitted by e-mail or
text.

Contact the Church Music Department at 601-292-3272
or wsouth@mbcb.org for more information.

Refresh

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST STUDENT MINISTERS'
FALL RETREAT

October 8-11, 2018 • Orange Beach, AL



CHIP STEVENS

First Baptist Church, Starkville
Speaker



CORY CARR

Community Church, Oxford
Worship Leader

Registration: www.mbc.org/student-ministers-retreat/

Contact Discipleship/Family Ministry at redwards@mbcb.org for
more information.

To Be Sent September 26, 2018, by the WMU Office

PLEASE NOTE THE TIMING: Thank you for your love and support of MKs by sending Birthday cards! Because of the sending to other countries, there is a need to get cards sent a month ahead of birthday. As soon as the list is in the Baptist Record, please send the cards and not wait until a couple of weeks before the date of the birthday. It is posted two months ahead to give time to receive cards and then to mail them a month ahead of time to insure arrival around birthdays. Again, thank you for being a blessing to so many with this ministry!

NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.

FOR SECURITY: cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: MBCB WMU MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205.

Please include your return address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.



Miss Micah
10/04/01
Parents: Charlie & Shannon Worthy
European Peoples

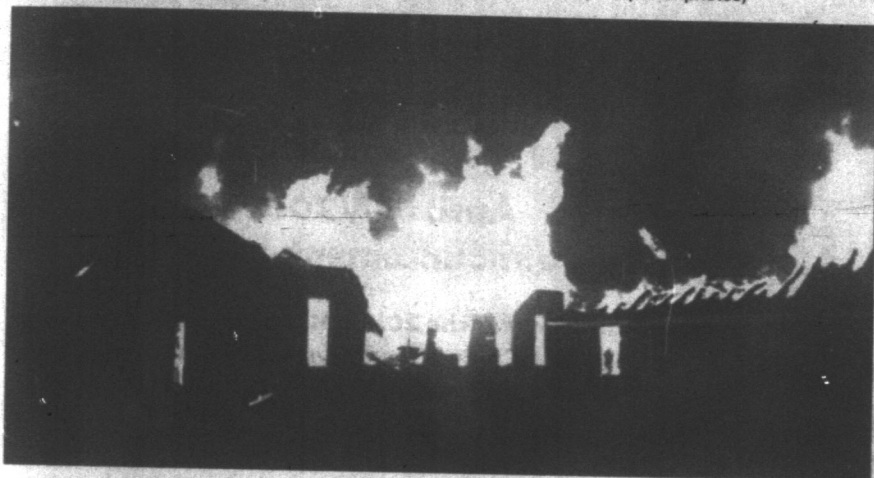
Miss Charlie Adair
10/24/11
Parents: James & Mary Margaret
Sub-Saharan African Peoples



HOUSE TOPS

Miss. churches damaged after more lightning strikes

Pleasant Hill Church in Ashland (below) and Ingalls Avenue Church in Pascagoula (right) became the third and fourth churches in the Mississippi Baptist Convention known to have sustained fire damage this year from lightning strikes. Pleasant Hill Church pastor Herb Luther said the fire broke out about 10 p.m. on July 19. The church is a total loss, he said, except for the separate fellowship hall that was saved by fire fighters. No damage estimates are currently available, Luther said. Ingalls Avenue Church senior pastor John Turner reported the fire there was noticed by a neighbor at about 9 a.m. on July 31. Damage was minor because a fire station is located just a few blocks from the church, he said. Church staffers along with children and workers in a pre-school program were all safely evacuated, Turner said. No damage estimates were available, he added. (BR special photos)



Revivals & Homecomings

► **Magee's Creek Church, Jayess:** 45th annual homecoming, Aug. 12; service, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch and afternoon singing featuring Calm Assurance; David Millican, speaker; Pat Bourg, pastor.

► **Evansville Church, Arkabutla:** Revival, Aug. 12 - 15; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. nightly; Don Borne, speaker; Bill Britton, music.

► **Ephesus Church, Forest:** Revival, Aug. 12 - 15; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Randall Creel, speaker; Randy Cuchens, music. Mon. - Tues., 7 p.m.; Danny Lanier, speaker; Randy Cuchens, music. Wed., youth emphasis; Jordan Robinson, speaker; Mikel Snow & Band, music.

► **First Church, Clara:** One-day revival, Aug. 12; services, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Jerry Watts, speaker; Donna Alford, music; Richard Bradley, pastor.

► **Concord Church, Ackerman:** Homecoming, Aug. 12, 10:50 a.m., followed by potluck; Jim Garner, speaker; Cindy Stevenson and Irby Ford, music. Revival, Aug. 19 - 22; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Paul Blanchard, speaker; Nita Foust and Teresa Simpson, music; Roger Griffith, pastor.

► **Jones County Bible Con-**



MARS HILL CHURCH, PETAL, celebrated its 95th anniversary homecoming July 8. Bill Brown, guest speaker, with pot luck lunch, special music, and testimonials.

ference, Salem Heights Church, Laurel: Aug. 12 - 14; John Sullivan, Sun., 10 a.m., Mon., 12 p.m., and Tues., 12 p.m.; Robert Smith, Sun., 6 p.m.; Phil Hoskins, Mon., 6:30 p.m.; Jeff Laborg, Tues., 6:30 p.m.; music by conference choir from participating churches; worship provided for children nightly, K - 6th grade.

► **Liberty Heights Church, DeKalb:** Homecoming, Aug. 12; services, 11 a.m.; Malcolm Lewis, speaker. Revival, Aug. 13 - 15; 6 p.m. dinner; 7 p.m. worship; Tommy Cheshire, speaker; Emily Robinson, music.

► **Spring Hill Church, Waterford:** Revival, Aug. 10 - 12; Fri. - Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun., 10:30 a.m.; Tim Mims, speaker; James Overton, music; John Parker, pastor. (photo)

► **Lantrip Church, Bruce:** Revival, Aug. 12 - 15; Sun., 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; J.T. Pennington, Andy Russell, David Clark, and Charlie Fitts, speakers; Bill Bailey, music; DeAnna Wooten, pianist; Robert Earl Alexander, pastor.

► **Salem Church, Raymond:** Homecoming, Aug. 12, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Tommy Jarrett, speaker.

CAREY

cont. from p. 1

"Students from the Gulf Coast and south Mississippi can live at home while they go to school. They can stay near their support systems, their families, and friends, he said."

The other pharmacy school in the state is located at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

Carey's pharmacy school is one of only 11 accelerated programs in the country, enabling students to earn a doctor of pharmacy degree in two years and 10 months, instead of the more traditional four years. Classes will meet year-round in four terms of 10 weeks each.

WCU president Tommy King spoke to the inaugural class during orientation, and blessed the opening of the school. "Through the years, William Carey University has sought to identify needs and to meet those needs."

"We've had a school of nursing for decades. With the addition of a medical school, a physical therapy school, and a health information management program at our Hattiesburg campus, we increasingly saw the need to help increase access to health care."

"While the shortage of pharmacists is not as severe in other parts of the country as it once was, Mississippi still has a severe shortage. I've also just reviewed recent studies that show, over the next decade, the demand for pharmacists will be twice what was expected."

WCU Provost Scott Hummel agreed. "Providing quality health care is challenging in Mississippi. It's a problem of access exacerbated by low incomes and the fact that Mississippi is a largely rural state."

"Our approach is to develop more primary care resources to meet the needs where they exist, not just in our larger cities."

The average age of the 58 students in inaugural class is 27.5 years. The class includes students from Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Massachusetts, and North Carolina.

The 33,000-square-foot pharmacy building currently under construction at the Tradition campus will be named in honor of the spirit of giving shown by Joe Frank Sanderson Jr. and his wife Kathy. A native of Laurel, Joe Frank Sanderson is chief executive officer and chairman of the board of Sanderson Farms, Inc.

Sanderson Hall is expected to be ready for occupancy in October.

Last fall, Miss. Gov. Phil Bryant announced the U.S. Department of the Treasury had issued a one-million-dollar grant award to the WCU pharmacy school for accreditation support, part of the RESTORE program established after the BP oil spill and overseen by the Miss. Department of Environmental Quality.

WCU is one of three institutions of higher learning supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program. The others are Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain, and Mississippi College in Clinton.

Annual meeting for WMU/WM scheduled at Garaywa

CLINTON (Special) — The Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union and Women's Ministries (WMU/WM) auxiliary to the Mississippi Baptist Convention will hold its 2018 annual meeting titled, Unshakable Pursuit — Celebrating Missions and Ministries, August 17-18 at Garaywa Camp and Conference Center in Clinton.

The meeting will include leadership training for WMU missions and Women's Ministry leaders. Other features are a refugee camp simulation, international tea time, a Garaywa scavenger hunt, displays and exhibits, and a LifeWay store.

Speakers include Ryan and Seane Rice of the North American Mission Board's Send City: New Orleans ministry; Meredith Wilder with the International Mission Board; Cynthia Martin, executive director of Safely Home Refugee Ministry in Las Vegas; and Emily Dean, director of women's academics at New Orleans Seminary.

Doug Spire, associate pastor for worship, music, and communications at First Church, Vicksburg, will lead worship.

There is no cost for the program, but registration and payment are required for lodging and meals. Deadline for registration is August 10.

For more information about the WMU/WM meeting, visit www.mbc.org/event/unshakable-pursuit/. E-mail: amassey@mbcb.org. Telephone: (601) 292-3319. Web page: www.mbc.org/event/unshakable-pursuit/.



Schedule

FRIDAY, AUGUST 17

2:30 p.m. Registration Opens, Auditorium Lobby
3:00 p.m. Early Bird Conference Session 1
4:15 p.m. Early Bird Conference Session 2
5:30 p.m. Dinner, Main Dining Hall
6:30 p.m. Pre-worship, Activity Building
6:45 p.m. Worship Celebration, Activity Building
8:30 p.m. Conference Session 3
9:30 p.m. Fellowship, Main Dining Hall

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18

7:00 a.m. Breakfast, Main Dining Hall
8:00 a.m. Conference Session 4
9:00 a.m. Worship Celebration w/WMU Annual Meeting Activity Building
10:30 a.m. Grab & Go Break
10:45 a.m. Conference Session 5
11:45 a.m. Conference Session 6
12:45 p.m. Lunch & Dismiss

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

BIBL iOCiPHER

HUG RPFU PF RHN EJWF ZU, PF NHZG

KUYJ YPFW, RPX WHMF XF YPZN HGJ,

HUG RFFO? YPF GHWNFA ZN UJY

GFHG, DKY NAFFOFYP.

WHLM IZQF: YPZLYX-UZUF.

Clue: M = K

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke 6:41

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

MSAudio LLC

Design & Integration of Professional Audio, Video, & Lighting
Church, Conference Room, School
Equipment sales, service and installation

Trooper Hales

info@msaudiollc.com

P.O. Box 1575

Clinton, MS 39060

Ph 601-923-9947

Fax 601-924-2880

Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Resolved • 2 Samuel 21:1-6, 10-14

If you have read the first six verses of today's focal passage you may have experienced the shell shock I did. To this Mississippian used to the protection of the United States Constitution and especially the Bill of Rights and our Mississippi constitution and courts, nothing in these verses sounds like anything I have seen or experienced.

There is some background to help us understand, even if still shocked at what happened. One of the major assets of the Biblical revelation is total honesty and candor. We can and will find the background for these strange and uncomfortable events. When we look carefully at the background from the book of Joshua we will clearly see that God's leadership was not sought or followed many years before the events of today's lesson. Not seeking God's will and fully following it will always have long term consequences.

King David asked the Lord why the three year famine continued. God answered very directly: "It is due to Saul and to his bloody family, because he killed the Gibeonites," 2 Samuel 21:1 (CSB). This verse raises some obvious and basic questions. The first question is, "Who are the Gibeonites?" Verse 2 begins to answer this "who" question. "The Gibeonites were

not Israelites but rather a remnant of the Amorites. The Israelites had taken an oath concerning them, but Saul tried to kill them," 2 Samuel 21:2 (CSB).

We need to turn to the Biblical record of Israel's conquest of the Promised Land in Joshua chapter 9 to understand this oath. A very creative novelist would be very challenged to write a more intriguing

trick than the trick the Gibeonites carried out on Joshua and Israel's leaders. This historical event once again illustrates the truth that reality is often stranger than fiction.

To set the scene for this story, remember Joshua's total defeat of Jericho and Ai. The kings west of the Jordan were scared and reacting out of fear. The kings of the Hethites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites formed a military alliance to fight Israel. But the Gibeonites felt that fighting against Joshua and Israel would be futile. So, "They acted deceptively.

They gathered provisions and took worn-out sacks on their donkeys and old wineskins, cracked and mended. They wore old, patched sandals on their feet and threadbare clothing on their bodies. Their entire provision of bread was dry and crumbly," Joshua 9:4-5 (CSB). It really looked like they had traveled a very long way (which they had not). The Gibeonites then lied to

Joshua and the men of Israel. They said "We come from a distant land. Please make a treaty with us," Joshua 9:6 (CSB).

They used deceptive flattery to press their case for a treaty. "Your servants have come from a faraway land because of the reputation of the LORD your God. We have heard of his fame, and all that he did in Egypt . . . "So our elders and all the inhabitants of our land told us, . . . go meet them and say . . . Please make a treaty with us," Joshua 9:9-11 (CSB).

To seal the deal and reinforce the deception about the distance and travel

time, they said, "This bread of ours was warm when we took it from our houses . . . "Joshua 9:12. The men of Israel decided to check out their story by tasting some of their provision. Sure enough the bread was old, dry, moldy, and crumbly. The Scriptures identified the problem in Joshua 9:14b: "but [they] did not seek the LORD's decision." Without seeking God's direction, Joshua "made a treaty to let them live, and the leaders of the community swore an oath to them," Joshua 9:15. Oaths must be kept.

Three days after making the treaty with them, they heard that the Gibeonites were their neighbors, living among them. . . . But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the community had sworn an oath to them by the LORD, the God of Israel," Joshua 9:16-18 (CSB). "This is how we will treat them: we will let them live, so that no wrath will fall on us because of the oath . . . [then] Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said to them . . . you are cursed and will always be slaves - woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God," Joshua 9:20-23 (CSB).

Hicks is associational missions director for Jasper Association in Bay Springs.



Explore the Bible with Don Hicks

Protect • Nehemiah 5:1-13

Worse than betrayal by an enemy is betrayal by a friend. David knew betrayal (Psalm 41:9): "Even my best friend, the one I trusted completely, the one who shared my food, has turned against me." (NLT) Jesus was betrayed by Peter and Judas (Luke 22:48; Mark 14). Betrayal can be denial, sharing private information, or taking advantage of one's situation for gain. Nehemiah's fellow Jews betrayed their own brothers by charging them interest and forcing them to enter debt in order to survive.

Nehemiah 5:1-5. Believers are to support and not take advantage of others. In addition to all the hardships associated with the rebuilding of the wall, the Jews were experiencing a famine. Many had large families to feed, but even a small family during such a time can be a heavy burden. Since all the men were laboring on the wall, there was little time to tend to daily needs. Many had to mortgage their "fields and vineyards to pay . . . taxes (vv 3-4)." As in most societies, some of the Jews were wealthy, some were middle class, and some were poor. The wealthy Jews were loaning money to the poorer Jews and accepting their children as slaves (Nehemiah 5:4-5). The wealthy were charging interest which was strictly forbidden in the Mosaic Law (Exodus 22:25; Deuteronomy 23:19).

Nehemiah 5:6-11. How I treat others reflects how I honor God. When Nehemiah heard of the actions of the wealthy Jews, he became very angry (v. 6). Not only were the wealthy being insensitive, but they are breaking God's laws. Nehemiah takes time to consider the situation (wisdom); and then he called a "public meeting" (v. 7). When the men were confronted with their sin, they did not defend their actions (v. 7).

Nehemiah confronted them, not only over their unjust actions, but concerning their relationship with God: "...Should

you not walk in the fear of our God in order to avoid being mocked by enemy nations?" v. 9 (NLT) He then challenged them to return the property of the poorer Jews and the interest that had been collected.

After washing the Disciples' feet, predicting Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial, Jesus gave His Disciples a "...new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you...Your love for one another will

prove to the world that you are my disciples." John 13:34-35 (NLT) The world observes how we treat other people, especially each other. Believers are God's Ambassadors. In a world where betrayal and mistreatment are honored; in a world where wisdom is judged to be owned by the one who gets ahead at the expense of others, Believers are to be different; Believers put the interest of others ahead of themselves. Jesus asserted that the entire Scripture could be summed up in two commandments: Love God; Love Others. (Matthew 22:37-40)



Bible Studies for Life with Lisa Bannister



Nehemiah 5:12-13. Repentance means turning to a lifestyle that fully honors God. The wealthy Jews were quick

to repent of their sin and promised to "...give back everything and demand nothing more from the people..." v. 12 (NLT) Would the Jews' apology for their charging interest and putting the others into bondage have been adequate? No. The Greek for "repentance" is metanoeo, which is to

change one's mind or purpose (Strong's). True repentance results in the transformation of attitude and behavior.

John preached repentance; Jesus preached repentance. "Repent and turn..." (Matthew 3:2; 4:17) When a person repents of his sins and accepts Jesus, his life will be marked by changes in attitude and behavior. When Zacchaeus repented and accepted Jesus as the only way to be saved; he showed his repentance by his actions (Luke 19:1-10). The actions did not save Zacchaeus (Ephesians 2:8-9), but his salvation resulted in a changed heart, where by he wanted to make restitution.

The same is true of a Believer. Believers' hearts are changed, but Believers still sin. Peter loved and believed in Jesus with all of his heart; yet, he denied Jesus (John 18). However, Peter repented of his denial and allowed himself to be restored (John 21). After Jesus' resurrection Peter preached at Pentecost (Acts 2), performed miracles (Acts 3), and was crucified for his faith.

Believers live in obedience to Jesus so that the world will desire to know the One Who enables them to live above their circumstances. The world will know we are Christians by our love for one another (John 13:35).

Bannister is a member of Woodville Church, Woodville.

LEADERSHIP

cont. from p. 1

■ Thomas Magers II, pastor of Holly Church, Corinth.

■ Jason Middleton, pastor of Meadowview Church, Starkville.

■ Tim Mims, BMC assistant professor of Biblical studies.

■ Allen Guyer, pastor of Riverview Church in Savannah, Tn. Brent Colley, minister of music at Riverview Church, led worship.

The inaugural Christian Leadership Institute provided an impressive group of young men with the opportunity to be mentored, encouraged, and inspired by a host of outstanding leaders from an array of back-

grounds," said BMC president Barbara McMillin.

"Participants were introduced to biblical principles of leadership as practiced by pastors, political figures, professors, and community leaders. This investment in shaping the next generation of Christian leaders will prove to be critical for the future of our churches

and our communities. Blue Mountain College is grateful for the privilege of hosting this important endeavor," she said.

Digby said now that the pilot CLI event has been accomplished and termed a success, he plans to expand next year's CLI to include young female leaders, too.

For more information on the CLI program, contact CAC

at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3329 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651 ext. 329. E-mail: rmccollum@christianaction.com. Web site: www.christianaction.com.

The ministries of the Christian Action Commission are supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

Just for the Record



TOOMSBA CHURCH, LAUDERDALE COUNTY ASSOCIATION, held a backpack dedication July 29. Shown are teachers and students.



The youth group of **CLEAR CREEK CHURCH, OXFORD**, served on a mission trip to Mission Arlington, Arlington, Tex.



GRACE CROSSING CHURCH, GLUCKSTADT, ordained Leston Cowart (second from right) to the Gospel ministry July 29. Joining Cowart are (from left) pastor Kevin Cooper, wife Misty, daughter Abby, and son Seth.



SEMINARY CHURCH, SEMINARY, ordained Austin Aultman to the Gospel ministry July 22. Shown are pastor Tim Hubbard, Aultman, and associate pastor Colby Lambert.



Members of the youth group of **SUNRISE CHURCH, LEAKE COUNTY**, attended Centrifuge camp in Mobile, Ala.



Darrell Williams leads the senior adult choir of **FIRST CHURCH, MCCOMB** as they perform a cantata written and composed by Thomas Moak Jr., in honor of Moak's 70 years in church music ministry. The Patmos Connection tells the story of John and how Christ inspired him to write the book of Revelations while exiled on the Isle of Patmos. Moak and Willa, his wife of 63 years, have served in numerous churches in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee.



CALVARY CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO, recognized its college and high school graduates May 27.



Members of the Explorer's Bible Study met to make plans for the new study, Judges and Kings of Israel, beginning in August at **FIRST CHURCH, BRANDON**. The morning group will meet from 9:30 to 11:00 on Tuesdays, beginning August 14, and the evening group will meet from 6:00 to 7:15 on Wednesdays, beginning August 15, both at the Boyce Thompson Campus of the church. Call Rita Latham, teacher, at (662) 378-6211, for details. Pictured left to right are Lea Patrick, Hazel Shedd, Karen Haynes, Sheila Brown, Tracie Patrick, Rita Latham, Bobby Ashley, Eleanor Hall and Bonnie Spencer.

MANAGING MONEY AND MORE

August 24-26th
Woodland Baptist Church
3033 Ridge Road, Columbus, MS, 39705

Primary Speakers:

Alex MacFarland
<https://alexmcfarland.com/about-alex/>

Wesley Platt
<http://www.wesleyplatt.com/honour-team>

Speaking Times @ Woodland Baptist Church

Friday, 7-8pm
The Truly Christian Position on Homosexuality

Saturday, Doors Open at 9am
The Christian Family: America's Last Best Hope
Managing Money as a Kingdom Christian
Stand: Core Truths for an Unshakable Faith
Apologetics 101
Fellowship and Dismissal